

THE PACIFIC Commercial Advertiser.

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FRIDAY : : : : : MARCH 9

Hereafter the contents of the Advertiser will regularly include the real estate transactions as they are made known on the official records.

The plague in Japan is over and that in Manila is abating. Evidently sanitary science has nothing to dread from the scourge in the way of widespread and persistent mortality.

Spain has put an almost prohibitive duty on American imports, including petroleum. This may be regarded as her first move for a reciprocity treaty and as a strong bid for the backing therein of the Standard Oil Company.

The Chinese reformers who talk of rejuvenating the old Mongol Empire are hopeful spirits, but it is doubtful that they can make any inroads upon the ancient conservatism of that curious land. Nevertheless China will advance, but the motive power will be furnished by the nations that are partitioning it. Under the flags of Russia, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, France and possibly the United States the China of the future cannot do otherwise than share in the general progress of civilization.

On Tuesday morning early the Gaelic arrived with the Oriental mail. Twenty-four hours later the Advertiser got some of its papers and forty-eight hours later the rest of them. One of the early benefits of complete annexation will be a postoffice that is able to keep clerks enough to sort mail matter promptly and has, besides, a force of carriers to get it to its destination on time. As things are now, the retrenchment policy, both in the Postoffice and the Custom House, is playing the mischief with the public interests.

Is it not possible for a man who always uses a mule car or a bicycle for his private business to get along without a \$12 per day hack for his public business? Glimpses of the hack abuse were had awhile ago when a bill of \$5,000 was reported. When it is remembered that the public service at the Custom House and Postoffice is going to the dogs on account of plague outlay, a little diffidence in the matter of fancy expenditures would be becoming in the Health Board. It is time to cut down the hack brigade to a corporal's guard.

Complaints are made several times a week of reckless driving and bicycling and the time is at hand for vigorous prosecutions. Most of the trouble comes from turning corners at too high a rate of speed or from violating the law of the road. We notice that, as respects driving or riding and turning out on the wrong side, Asiatic hackmen and bicyclists are the chief offenders. In China and Japan every native driver and pedestrian turns to the left and naturally people from those countries easily forget themselves and obey the same habit here. The remedy for such absent-mindedness and for too rapid driving, is in the hands of the police.

A new lumber company is on the tapis, which will, we trust, succeed on the basis of fair play to the purchaser. Prices of lumber, which are regulated by a local combine, are now such as to yield abnormal profits and they must, if not cut down, interfere with the progress of the city. Aside from shacks to shelter the Asiatics there is not nearly the amount of home-building in Honolulu that there should be, especially in the suburban additions. Nor can a construction boom be looked for when every one knows that a house built at present prices for the raw material may be reduced one-third in value by the lumber scale which will ensue from the future competition which the demand for building material is bound to make. From the standpoint of the greatest good to the greatest number the sooner the preserves of the lumber trust are invaded the better.

James W. Girvin explains that his engagement with the Chinese to go to Washington was that of an attorney in opposition to the order of the President extending the American exclusion laws to these islands. He does not wish it to be understood that his clients wanted him to oppose the Cullom Bill in its original form. Mr. Girvin does not believe that R. W. Wilcox is backed at Washington by Chinese money, nor did the Advertiser take that rumor absolutely for granted. But there is very strong affirmative testimony which is not weakened by the statement that Mr. Wilcox is representing a "certain Hawaiian" in the quest of Crown lands. The "certain Hawaiian" is his wife, who, we may remark, is hardly in a position to put up for "Bob's" expenses. Nor would the Queen's friends do so, considering that she is also a Crown land claimant. As to the story of a Chinese connection for Wilcox, it comes from a man to whom Wilcox himself imparted the news at Washington.

CHINATOWN REDIVIVUS.

Shacks are going up in various sections of the city in absolute or partial neglect of the regulations of the Board of Health. Twenty-six building permits were issued in February, but few of which carried a special sanitary clause. Of these permits fifteen went to Orientals and some of the remainder to white men who may build shacks for Asiatic tenants. Many of the structures under way are close to the ground and are in other respects calculated to renew the conditions which brought about successive plagues.

During March, up to yesterday, forty-four permits were issued, twenty-two to Chinese and Japanese. Each permit carries with it an obligation to comply with the rules of the Board. This is good so far as it goes, but if it goes no further it will be good for nothing. The point is not to put "clauses in a lease" or other documents, as certain big property-owners are wont to do, and let the matter go at that, but to enforce the laws to see that the "clauses" are complied with. This duty now devolves upon the overworked Board of Health and therefore does not promise all that might be wished for. The trouble too often with the Board of Health has been that it would give sound orders and then fail to execute them. That is why, with plenty of laws to prevent the accumulation of filth, Chinatown was permitted to lapse into a state of fearful nastiness. In the case of the building permits we shall have a new outfit of insanitary shacks to deal with before long unless the Board follows up all building operations in Honolulu and does it with inspectors who cannot be misled or bribed. But it is not all clear sailing. Considering how much else the Board will have on hand during the existence of the plague, the building inspection program seems fraught with difficulties.

The Advertiser proposes to help the Board out by keeping its own eyes open and reporting every instance of insanitary building it may discover. To this end it asks information or clues from any quarter, which it will treat confidentially so far as the informant's name is concerned. All it desires is to aid the Board in maintaining the proper sanitary standards here. If the entire press of the city would join in this undertaking we do not doubt that the community would reap prompt and very general benefit.

The cost of living is mounting upward so rapidly in Japan as to visibly reduce the danger of cheap labor competition with Western nations. When workmen have to pay nearly double the sum for the necessities of life that was asked of them a few years ago they are compelled to demand higher wages and the product of their toil and skill, therefore, takes on an enhanced price. How great the advance in the market value of the principal daily necessities has become appears in the following comparative table, prepared by the Osaka Asahi, which takes 100—the average price in January 1887—as a basis and proceeds as below:

	December.	January.
1892	120	118
1893	127	128
1894	140	137
1895	148	150
1896	169	163
1897	194	193
1898	179	184
1899	215	214

A well-known citizen whose views are reported elsewhere does not think much of the paid inspectorate as a means of ferreting out cases of plague. He says the Asiatics and others who cultivate the bubonic germs will find it easy, after a few days, to fool an inspector who has an immense district to handle and will be able to conceal their cases of sickness from him. As a substitute measure he proposes an increase of the reward for the discovery of plague victims. We are not sure but the inspectorate and the bigger reward ought to go together, but time will tell. The way to determine what is best is to give the new inspectors a chance. If they do well, nothing more need be said; if not, the fact will be apparent in a short time and the remedy clear.

A local contemporary advises the Food Inspector, Mr. Shorey, to "hew to the line." That is precisely what Mr. Shorey has been doing. But there is small encouragement to hew at all when the Police Court imposes a \$5 fine on a bogus butter dealer who has earned a \$200 fine, and lets off a milk adulterator who ought to have one hundred days in jail, with the lowest fine permitted by the law. When the Police Court gets ready to do its duty there will be no occasion to complain of the Food Inspector.

MR. DOOLEY TALKS.

Mr. Dooley was reading the war news—not our war news, but the war news we are interested in—when Mr. Hennessy interrupted him to ask "What's a war expert?"

"A war expert," said Mr. Dooley, "is a man never heard of before. If you can think of anywar whose face is unfamiliar to you and you don't remember his name and he's got a job on a paper you didn't know was published, he's a war expert. 'Tis a hard-rod office to fill.

When a war begins th' temptation is strong fr' ivry man to grab hold iv a gun an' go to th' fr-ont. But th' war expert has to subjug his cravin' fr' blood. He says to himself: 'Lave others seek th' luxuries iv life in camp,' he says. 'Fr' thim th' boat races across th' Tugela, th' romp over th' kopje, an' in game iv laager, laager, who's got th' laager,' he says. 'I will stand by me country,' he says, 'close,' he says. 'n' if it fails,' he says, 'it'll fall on me,' he says. An' he buys himself a map made by a fortune-teller in a dream, a box iv pencils an' a field glass an' goes an' looks fr' a job as a war expert. Says th' editor iv a pa-aper, 'I don't know ye. Ye must be a war expert,' he says. 'I am,' says th' la-ader. 'Was ye iv'er in a war?' says th' editor. 'I've been in nawthin' else,' says th' la-ader. 'During th' Spanish-American war I held a good job as a dramatic critic in Dedham, Massachusetts,' he says. 'Whin th' bullets flew thickest in th' Soodan I was spoortin' editor iv th' 'Christian Advocate'," he says. 'I passed through th' Franco-Prussian war an' held me place an' whin th' Turks and Rooshans was at each others' throats I used to lay out th' campaign ivry day on a checker board,' he says. 'War,' he says, 'has no terrors fr' me,' he says. 'Ye're th' man fr' th' money,' says the editor. An' he gets th' job.

"Thin th' war breaks out in earnest. No matter how many is kilt, annything that happens before th' war expert gets to wurruk is only what ye might call a preliminary skirmish. He sets down an' bites th' end iv his pencil an' looks across th' shreet an' watches a man paintin' a sign. Whin th' man gets through he goes to th' window an' waits to see whether th' policeman that went into th' saloon is afther a drink or sarvin' a warrant. If he comes r-right out 'tis a warrant. Thin he sets back in a chair an' figures out that th' pitchers on th' wall pa-aper are all alike ivry third row. Whin his mind is thurly tuned up he these intricate problems he dashes to his desk an' writes what ye an' a r-read th' nex' day in th' pa-apers."

"'Clarence Pontoon, th' military expert iv th' London 'Mornin' Dhrum,' reviewin' Gin'ral Buller's position on th' Tugela says: 'It is manifest fr'm th' dispatches that Gin'ral Buller has erost th' Tugela river. This we r-read in spite iv th' elisor. Th' question is which side he has erost to. On Friday he was on th' north side in th' mornin' an' on th' south side at night an' in th' river at noon. We heard nawthin' Sathurdah mornin'. Th' presumption is that he was nawthin' to hear. Therefore it is alasy to imagine Gin'ral Buller findin' his position on th' north side untenable an' his position on th' south side unbearable, is transportation th' inimy between Spitzozone an' Rottenfontein, two immensely shroom points. All this demonstrates th' fooltily an' foolishness iv attemptin' to carry a frontal position again large, well-fied Dutchmen with mud in fr-ont iv thim. I calculate that it wud require thirty millyon thurly dauntless Britons to ixecute such a manoever, tin Boers ar-armed with pop bottles bein' now considered th' akel iv a brigade. What I wud do if I was Buller, an' thank Hiven I'm not, wud be to move me ar-my in half-an-hour over th' high but alasy accessible mountains to th' right iv Crownjoy's forces, an' takin' off me shoes so be cudent hear thim squeak, creep up behind th' Dutch an' lam their heads off. After this stroke 't'wud be alasy fr' to get th' forces iv Fr-rinch, Gatacre, Methoon an' Winston Churchill together some afternoon, invite th' inimy to a band concert, surround an' massacre thim. This adroit move end be ixecuted if Roberts wud on'y make use iv th' ixcellent bus service between Mokesmith an' Mikesmith. It is extraordinary that th' gin'ral on th' groun' has not seen th' possibilities so apparent at a distance."

"That's wan kind iv war expert, Hinnissy. Another kind is wan that gives it good to th' government. Says William McClue, war expert iv th' London 'Mornin' Growl,' who's supposed to be check be jowl with Lord Wolseley: 'England's greatness is slippin' away. Th' failure iv th' government to provide a well-equipped, thurly pathrotic army iv Boers to carry on this war under th' leadership iv gallant Joeport is goin' to be our ruination. We ar-re betrayed by a lazy, effete, side-whiskered, golf-plain' government that wud rather lose this fight thin win it because they ar-re tired iv holdin' office. What can be said fr' public men so lost to shame that they spell kopje with a "c" an' ar-re sardin' Englishmen to th' ends iv th' wurruil to fight fr' England. Down with thim!'"

"Well, sir, 'tis a great thing fr' a country to have th' likes iv thim ar-round to direct manoevers that'd be gatherin' dust on th' shelves iv th' gin'ral's had their say an' to prove to th' wurruil that th' English ar-re not frivolous, excitable people like us an' th' Fr-rinch but can take a batin' without losin' their heads."

"Sure," said Mr. Hinnissy, "tis not thim that does the fightin'. Th' la-ads with th' guns has that job."

"Well," says Mr. Dooley, "they're two kinds of fightin'. Th' experts wants th' ar-my to get into Pretoria, dead or alive, an' th' sojers wants to get in alive. I'm no military expert, Hinnissy. I'm too well known. But I have me own opinion iv th' war. All this talk about th' rapid-fire gun an' modern methods iv warfare makes me wonder. They're not so much difference between war now an' war when I was a kid, as they let on. Th' gun that shoots ye best fr'm a distance don't shoot you so well close to. A pile iv mud is a pile iv mud now just th' same as it was whin Gin'ral Grant was pokin' ar-round. If th' British can get over th' mud pile they win th' fight. If they can't they're done. That's all they're to it. Mos' men, strongest backs, best eyes an' th' ownership iv the mud piles—that's war, Hinnissy. Th' British have th' men. They're shy iv backs, eyes an' mud pile, an' they will be until they learn that sheep-herdin' an' gin'ralship ar-re different things an' fill up their ar-my with men that ar-re not fightin' fr' money or glory, but because they want to get home to their wives alive."

"Ye talk like an ol' book," said Mr. Hennessy in disgust. "Ye, with ye-er maundhrin', ar-re not better than thim expert la-ads."

"Well, annyhow," said Mr. Dooley, thoughtfully, "th' experts is sarvin' a useful purpose. Th' pa-apers says th' rapid-fire gun'll make war in th' future impossible. I don't think that, but I know th' expert will."

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